



OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL

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Honorable School Board Members and Superintendent of Duval County Schools,

Pursuant to discussions that have occurred both in City Council meetings and City Council Committee meetings, whereby it was determined that the City Council would submit a consolidated list of questions to the Board Members and Superintendent for response, I am providing you with questions that have been submitted by many of the members of City Council.

The questions are broken down by individual Council Member and have not been edited to preserve the original intent of the drafter. Therefore, you may find that some of the questions are duplicative or redundant. In addition, you may prefer to answer some or all of the questions in a consolidated or bundled fashion. We leave up to you the best manner to reply and your preferred method to format your responses to the questions.

I ask that you make all efforts to respond to these questions by Wednesday, August 7, 2019. I realize that you may not have all information available at this time to answer every question, so if some questions will need additional time, I would ask that you provide us with a timeline or schedule as to when we can expect answers to those questions.

My intent would be that once you provide the answers to the questions that can be answered now, that I, in conjunction, with Chair Hershey and Dr. Greene, would schedule a joint workshop of the City Council and the School Board Members to have a full discussion of the School Board's responses to these questions and any other information that may be provided at the joint workshop.

As you may expect, after answers are provided to some of the attached questions, there may be additional follow up questions, which I would anticipate may be answered at the joint workshop, through other written responses, or another noticed meeting, depending on the situation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Scott A. Wilson", is written over the word "Sincerely,".

Scott A. Wilson

2019-380 Council Member Questions

(as of 3:00 p.m. on 7/24/19)

- **Council Member Michael Boylan, District 6**

1. Does DCPS have a comprehensive campaign plan in hand which will effectively motivate a sufficient number of voters to vote in the affirmative so as to assure the positive outcome we all want to see? If so please provide a brief summary of the campaign messaging and dissemination plan.
2. Who is managing the campaign?
3. What is the projected cost of the campaign and how will it be funded?

- **Council Vice President Tommy Hazouri, At-Large Group 3**

1. I have heard three different projections on the District's student enrollment for each year, and the next several years. One from the District, the next from Charter school advocates, and the other from the State. The question, how do we determine the most reliable numbers as construction of new schools, consolidation of old schools, and renovations and additions to existing schools directly impact the costs and necessity of the entire proposal?
2. I have and have always been an advocate of the present, more stricter safety code for our schools. The charters are advocating the State's newly adopted uniform safety code. What is the difference in each requirement, i.e. the State's uniform code, and the District's present code?
3. Does the District expect to contribute any sales tax dollars collected to the Charter schools? If so, how will this be determined? What percentage? And, will it go to leased charter schools, or charter owned schools, or both?

- **Council Member Ron Salem, At-Large Group 2**

1. Why is the decrease in enrollment in the Master Facility Plan substantially different from trends over the last several years? How will enrollment numbers be monitored so the Master Facility Plan can be revised, if necessary?
2. Who will provide oversight to the implementation of the Master Facility Plan? What are the credentials of the members? Will an Operations Committee and a Finance Committee be established?
3. How will Charter Schools be funded beyond the security commitment already discussed?
4. Where will the Florida Uniform Building Code be utilized in construction/renovation?

- **Council Member Aaron Bowman, District 3**

My child was a public school student and having superior education in Jacksonville is of utmost importance for our residents and the ability to attract new business and residents to the city. Our buildings are dated and need attention. This debate is not an issue of "If", it is a multitude of issues and not having alignment between DCPS, the Administration, City Council, and strong business support is a recipe for failure and would make it much more difficult to pass in the future at another attempt if this effort fails. Is the referendum needed

immediately, is it the right amount, has DCPS instituted cost savings to reduce the fiscal impact, are all students addressed by this tax increase, is the plan well vetted, has DCPS been forthright in explaining a schedule and which schools are targeted for closure, is there a marketing plan that is ready to go to the voters, etc.? The questions below are varied across the DCPS enterprise deeper than City Council normally gets involved in School Issues. However, our Legislative System requires City Council determine if and when a school referendum is put before the voters. Given that requirement, it is imperative that Council perform its due diligence just as we do on our city budget every year on when and why the referendum is needed, how will the tax dollars be utilized, if approved by Council will it be supported by voters, is the money being collected adequate, and is the impact of collecting the money aligned with capital requirements of the city.

1. Never before has a tax referendum been attempted to be put on a ballot with as much haste, risk of failure, and lack of community engagement. Please explain the need for a Nov 2019 referendum, the marketing plan, marketing funding, plan to engage voters through town halls, neighborhood meetings, CPACS, Rotaries, etc. Justify the reason for spending tax-payer dollars for a Special Election which historically have extremely low voter turnout.
2. Given historical voter turnouts of less than 15% for Special Elections in Duval County, explain what subset of the 610,000 registered voters is expected to turn out to vote. Will they represent favorable voters for a tax increase or will they be a subset of unlikely supporters that are on fixed income or ones that do not have children in public schools? Validate the cost per family: my simple math says there are 1,000,000 residents and this will annually collect \$100M. That in turn means \$100 per person per year. Reduce that number to \$80 to account that 20% of our tax revenue is paid by non-residents. What is the real impact to every resident and every family?
3. Explain the desire and need to build to SREF standards and not waive to the new allowable Uniform Building Code requirements? What is the cost difference and potential savings by using now approved waiver processes? If the tax increase is not approved or if there is a slowdown in the economy that does not produce enough revenue will Uniform Building Code standards be used to save money to execute the plan?
4. What guarantees do we have that current identified schools for closure and consolidation will in fact happen? Have procedures required to close those schools been conducted and approved? Where is the school by school schedule on the build/modify/close/consolidate schedule that justifies the 15 year, 1/2 cent sales tax? When and how will the schedule be finalized and how will the public be involved? What guarantees does a voter have that supports the tax because they want to support their local school only to find out after the vote, that school is targeted for closure?
5. Explain the formula for revenue sharing for Charter Schools. Describe the regulatory process that will be used to guarantee tax revenue sharing before voters are asked to approve a tax increase. How will you re-write the referendum to ensure Charter Schools have their fair share to support all Duval County public students?
6. Justify the enrollment numbers given the increases currently seen in Charter enrollment. What process will be in place for the referendum, if approved, that would stop the tax collection if enrollment numbers drop lower than projected or sales tax collection significantly outpaces projections? Will DCPS offer closed school buildings to new

Charter schools?

7. What risk management plans will be in place if the economy enters into a recession and tax collection dollars do not meet needs of current plan?
8. Justify the need for the up-front plan to borrow \$500M. What impact does that have on Jacksonville's ability to borrow money and rates associated with borrowing? What is the impact to Jacksonville's credit rating? Has this borrow plan been coordinated with City Financial offices?
9. What is the School Board plan for selling its waterfront facility? The building is dated, not efficient, not configured for its use, and has significant recurring maintenance expenses. The property is desirable for investors given the development surrounding the building and if sold would have significant addition to ad valorem taxes. I have personally talked to developers who would work with DCPS on leasing a new facility that would meet requirements. Would the Board do a resolution that ensures that it is actively pursuing those plans?
10. Other Districts in the Nation have entered into Public Private Ventures by leasing school buildings. Those ventures eliminate most up-front costs, have no maintenance expenses, and no long term commitments on keeping a building that may be in the wrong location or becoming obsolete. Why have those agreements not been investigated? What would the cost savings be if DCPS leased buildings instead of purchased?
11. Updated and comfortable educational facilities are only one leg of the educational process. Buildings alone do not make better students. What actions are planned to be in concert with upgrading facilities that will promote gains in student education, recruit and retain the best teachers, and make Jacksonville a top performing district in the state and the country? Is there an additional plan to raise Millage rates for Operational costs? The voters expect to see an entire package of what a \$2B investment will do instead of just saying we have nice buildings.
12. The issue of having outdated and non-maintained buildings did not happen overnight. Explain why this tax will be a one-time event and describe the changes in procedures that will ensure we maintain buildings correctly in the future, close and consolidate schools that do not justify being operational, and lessons learned on how we got to where we are and will not get there again.
13. Justify and explain why DCPS will not investigate and open its own Charter Schools. Charter schools have been able to react quickly to need and demand at significantly lower cost. DCPS should be able to do the same thing. If not legal by state or local statutes, what do we need to change as legislators to allow DCPS to be more reactive and operate its own Charter Schools?
14. What efficiency and cost cutting measures has DCPS implemented in recent years and how do taxpayers know that internal cost-cutting measures have been investigated and thoroughly conducted prior to asking for a tax increase?
15. Why did DCPS not reveal the need to have an OPPAGA Performance Audit prior to a Special Election and give case examples on how quickly an audit may be conducted that would ensure an audit could be completed and posted prior to 5 Sep 2019. Are there other issues and risks that have not been shared?

- **Council President Scott Wilson, District 4**

1. Can you explain how similar schools have different plans? Why is one a rebuild and another that appears to be in the same or maybe better condition is a rehabilitation? Is the data available to the public?
2. What data was provided to change the plan from the original plan?
3. Where do you find the funds to operate a campaign to win in November 2019? Do you expect opposition?
4. Out of the 20 community meetings were there meetings held in every city council district? Were council members invited to attend the 20 meetings?
5. What city council districts have schools being completely closed? Are the schools being closed due to low enrollment numbers or for other reasons?
6. Where schools are being closed down is there a process to notify the community? Will there be public hearings on those changes prior to voter approval?

- **Council Member Randy DeFoor, District 14**

1. I would like to see a comprehensive plan: typically this would have been done by and included all of the stakeholders in determining the justification for the ½ cents sales tax and incorporated an administrative process plan done in 5 year increments such as the following example:

Part 1 - Justification

- a. Completion of the Facility Condition Assessment
- b. Schematic design phase.
- c. Analysis of the project accounting based on estimates and determination of the appropriate funding source

Part 2 - Identification of the criteria of the first set of schools to be addressed and a review of construction documents in relation thereto.

- a. Establishment of the Citizens review committee (including the criteria for membership).

Part 3 - Project Bid Awards for the first set of schools to be addressed

Part 4 - Project Completion of the first set of schools- to include project financing and interim reporting

Part 5 - Percentage set aside to address ongoing maintenance, repairs and continued modernization of projects

2. How is the District addressing the planned growth to various parts of Jacksonville? Are new schools being built in those areas?
3. What is the anticipated enrollment capacity of each school and how were these numbers determined?
4. Is the District going to borrow money for construction?
5. If so, if the Economy falters what happens if the debt service exceeds the revenue?
6. Has the District considered a pay as you go model considering the estimate of the tax is \$90 million a year?
7. Describe the change in the maintenance process going forward to insure that we are not going to repeat the same mistakes from the past. Today the District receives \$100 million a year for maintenance – how did we get in such a bad position and what will prevent us

from doing it again?

8. Are Charter Schools included in the plan as they represent at least 11% of all of the students in the District and they do not receive any part of the \$100 million but only receive PECO distributions which is half of what traditional schools receive? If not what needs to change in order for the District to feel comfortable including charter schools? i.e. title to school upon closure?

• **Council Member Rory Diamond, District 13**

1. How much money do you expect the proposed ½ cent sales tax to generate over 15 years? Aside from the new proposed sales tax, how much money will the District receive from local property taxes for facilities and maintenance over the next 15 years? What is the total cost of the District's Master Facilities Plan? Assuming the total collected from the ½ cent sales tax and local property taxes for facilities and maintenance over the next 15 years exceeds the cost of the District's Master Facilities Plan, what specifically will be done with the excess funds?
2. Please provide a breakdown by City Council District as to how much the District will spend in each Council District in the next two years and then in each Council District after the execution of the entire Master Facilities Plan.
3. Looking at District provided data, since the 2013-14 school year, student enrollment by District managed schools has declined each year by more than 1,000 students. When looking back over the past 10 years, enrollment has declined by over 800 students per year. Yet, the current Master Facilities plan is predicated on an average decline of 268 students per year over the next ten years, and Superintendent Greene stated at the Council Rules Committee on July 16th that there would be no decline in enrollment in District managed schools over the next ten years. First, is the above analysis incorrect and, if so, how is it incorrect? Second, if this analysis is generally correct, how does the District justify these enrollment projections? Third, does the District's Master Facilities Plan take into account the proposed new IDEA schools? If not, how will the District adjust for these new seats?
4. How many total students attended public charter schools in Duval County in 2018-19 and how many attended schools operated by the District (neighborhood schools, magnets, alternative schools, special education centers)? What is the enrollment projection for 2019-20?
5. For the 2018-19 fiscal year, what was the total value of all state and local revenues received for capital projects for schools and facilities directly operated by the district (not including public charter schools)? Included in this total would be proceeds from local capital improvement property taxes, any PECO distributions from the state, and any other state/local tax revenues. What are the specific sources of each of these revenues? Do you expect those revenues from these sources to increase or decrease for the 2019-20 school year? And, by how much?
6. For the 2018-19 fiscal year, what was the total value of all state and local revenues received for capital projects, for Duval's charter schools? Included in this total would be proceeds from local capital improvement property taxes, any PECO distributions from the state, and any other state/local tax revenues. What are the specific sources of each of these revenues? Do you expect those revenues from these sources to increase or decrease for the 2019-20 school year? And, by how much?

7. It appears the Duval County School Board (along with others) lobbied for the passage of HB 7055 that, as you know, allowed Florida school districts to save money on construction costs. After receiving the flexibility that it sought, why does the Duval Master Facility Plan prohibit the ability to leverage the potential cost savings that were sought through HB 7055? Of the \$1.9 billion of anticipated spending in the District's Master Facilities Plan, how much might be saved if the District prudently applied the flexibility offered in HB 7055, and avoided the most costly, inefficient and/or outdated aspects of State Requirements for Educational Facilities?
8. In the District's Master Facility Plan, two brand new schools (New 6-8 at Chaffee Trail, New K-8 at Southeast Duval County) are both estimated to cost precisely \$38,677,260. What is the anticipated enrollment capacity at each school, and how were these cost estimates derived?
9. In the Master Facility Plan and in planning documents posted on the OurDuvalSchools website, there are several schools to be constructed for a price of \$28,198,000. Sheffield, Southside Estates, Pickett, Pearson, and Livingston all have this price tag (demolition costs may vary for each site, but the core construction costs looks to be \$28,198,000 for each). What is the anticipated enrollment capacity at each school, and how were these cost estimates derived?
10. What was the method or formula used to estimate the costs to address facility condition issues at each school? Presumably, the condition of the school, the size of the school and some "cost per student" factor is included? Please explain.

• **Council Member Al Ferraro, District 2**

1. How much money do you receive from the Florida Lottery? Do you receive any other funding like the lottery?
2. What has the money been used on?
3. How many administrators per student? List 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010, 2019?
4. What is the budget for non-teaching staff? What has been spent on non-teaching staff in 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010 and 2019?
5. What is the administration's percent of growth in the last 20 years?
6. What percentage of the monies from the ½ cent sales tax would go to charter schools?
7. Projection and funding streams don't line up. Please explain?
8. Enrollment, where is it going public schools or charter schools?
9. How does the debt service work for or against the city?
10. What schools will be worked on first and who will be last?

• **Council Member LeAnna Cumber, District 5**

1. City Financial Impacts

- 1.1. How will a discretionary sales surtax impact the City of Jacksonville's credit rating?
- 1.2. What will be the additional cost for the City of Jacksonville to borrow money if the sales tax were to pass?
- 1.3. Will a discretionary sales surtax impact the City of Jacksonville's future borrowing capacity irrespective of any additional cost to borrow money?
- 1.4. What type of advocacy role does the DCPS expect the City Council and the Mayor to

engage in if the tax is placed on the ballot?

1.5. Does the DCPS have the funds necessary to advocate for the tax to be successful?

1.5.1. If yes, (a) from where will the funds originate, and (b) are the funds committed?

2. DCPS Revenues.

2.1. According to the Profiles of Florida School Districts the total local revenues for DCPS in 2017 – 2018 was \$436,183,274, or 35.42% of the total budget.¹ If the discretionary sales surtax were to pass, what percentage of the total budget would be comprised of local funds?

2.2. If the discretionary sales surtax were to pass what would the annual budget of the DCPS be?

3. Construction

3.1. Timeline.

A Bold Plan for DCPS lists schools that will be impacted by the discretionary sales surtax (*see* pages 6 – 19). The schools are separated into groupings based on the seven (7) School Board Districts. Under each School Board District page there is a listing of schools that will be impacted by the discretionary sales surtax. These schools are listed in alphabetical order.

3.1.1. Has Jacobs Engineering or any other engineering firm engaged by the DCPS provided the Superintendent of the Board preliminary construction schedules (e.g. Gantt charts) for each of the construction and/or maintenance projects?

3.1.1.1. If yes, will City Council be supplied with these preliminary schedules?

3.1.2. What is the actual order of construction and/or maintenance for the schools listed?

3.1.2.1. If there is no set construction order detailing which school will be the first to be subjected to construction and/or maintenance upgrades, when will DCPS have a comprehensive construction order list?

3.1.2.2. Is there a current Fiscal Year timeline for the construction and/or maintenance of the schools? This is not expected to be a detailed construction timeline for each project but a more generalized timeline grouping construction projects into outgoing Fiscal Years which will give parents, students, teachers and other stakeholders the ability to plan appropriately and to understand when each stakeholder can expect a direct benefit of the sales surtax.

3.1.2.2.1. If yes, when will this timeline be provided to City Council?

3.1.2.2.2. If no, (a) when will the DCPS have a list prepared, and (b) when will this timeline be provided to City Council?

3.1.2.2.3. Will the Fiscal Year timeline be subject to approval or alteration by the proposed Citizen's Advisory Committee?

3.1.2.2.4. Will the Fiscal Year timeline for the construction and/or maintenance of the schools be subject to change based on redistricting of the School Board Districts following the 2020 census?

3.2. Process for Demolition and Construction. What is the plan to not disrupt the school year for the students attending schools slated for demolition and reconstruction?

¹ See 2017 – 2018 Profiles of Florida School Districts, Duval. Florida Dep't. of Education, <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7507/urlt/1718Profiles.pdf> p. 41.

3.3. Work Plan.

3.3.1. In the 2016 – 2017 and 2017 – 2018 Work Plans, the DCPS states the *Capital Improvements at Current School and New Schools* amounts to \$60 million district wide over the next 10 years.² For the 20 year outlook the DCPS anticipated in both reports \$200 million over 20 years district wide. There are no corresponding maintenance plans or estimated costs for the 10 year or 20 year horizon. In years 2011 – 2012; 2012 – 2013; 2013-2014; and 2014-2015, the *Capital Improvements at Current School and New Schools* amounts to \$161 million district wide over the following 10 years and \$380 million over the following 20 year horizon.

3.3.1.1. Why were the capital needs estimates held static for 4 years and then dramatically reduced in 2016?

3.3.1.2. Why did DCPS's capital needs estimate in the 2017 – 2018 Work Plan as submitted to the Florida Department of Education indicate a need of \$200 million over the next 20 years and state “[n]othing reported for this section” in response to the Ten-Year Maintenance planning section, when in 2019 DCPS is estimating capital and maintenance needs of \$1.9 billion over 15 years?³

3.3.1.3. What are the capital plan and maintenance plan numbers (for both the 10 year outlook and 20 year outlook) included in the 2018 – 2019 Work Plan as submitted to the Florida Department of Education?

4. Consolidation.

4.1. Consolidation is mentioned as a part of the Master Facility Plan.

4.1.1. What are the projected savings to DCPS from the proposed consolidation including savings in maintenance and building operations but also in terms of personnel savings?

4.1.2. What is the timing on the consolidations and which consolidation will occur first?

4.1.3. How would an abandonment of school consolidation efforts impact DCPS finances as related to the Master Facility Plan and the discretionary sales surtax?

5. Referendum Timing.

5.1. Office of Program Policy Analysis and Governmental Accountability (OPPAGA)

5.1.1. Has the OPPAGA audit process started?

5.1.1.1. If yes, (a) on what date did it start, (b) what is the estimated completion date for the audit as provided by OPPAGA, and (c) does OPPAGA need any documentation from the City of Jacksonville demonstrating approval of the referendum for ballot to issue its final report?

5.1.1.2. If no, does OPPAGA need any documentation from the City demonstrating approval of the referendum for ballot to begin the audit process?

5.2. 2109 v. 2020.

5.2.1. There have been reports that some School Board members have offered to

² The most recent Work Plan available on the FL Dep't. of Education's website is 2017-2018. The 2017-2018 Work Plan was approved by the School Board on Nov. 7, 2017. See Florida Dep't. of Education, Five- Year Educational Work Plan Historical Data (<http://www.fldoe.org/finance/edual-facilities/wkplans/>).

³ See Florida Dep't. of Education, Five- Year Educational Work Plan Historical Data <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/9948/urlt/Duval1718.pdf> p. 44 – 46.

recommend a December 2019 ballot vote on the referendum to allow for additional time for DCPS to respond to the concerns of certain members of City Council.

5.2.1.1. If the referendum were placed on a December ballot, how does DCPS intend to comply with Florida Statute Title 14, Chap. 212.054 (7)(a)?

5.2.1.2. If 5.2.1.1. does occur but DCPS is unable to comply with Florida Statute 212.054(7)(a), what is the advantage of holding a ballot vote in December 2019 versus November 2020?

• **Council Member Brenda Priestly Jackson, District 10**

1. Provide the names and year built of all public schools in Duval County from 1956 until 1969.
2. Provide the names and year built of all public schools in Duval County from 1970 until 1985.
3. Provide the names and year built of all public schools in Duval County from 2000 until 2019.
4. Provide the case citation, including year and jurisdiction, and holding of each legal case filed involving Duval County Public Schools and desegregation, funding, equity or civil rights issues from 1954 until 2018.
5. Provide the student enrollment for Duval County Public schools each year from 1996 until 2019, disaggregated by traditional public schools and public charter schools. Include with this information data disaggregated by gender, race, socio-economic level, and school board district.
6. Provide the name and address of each public charter school authorized by the Duval County School Board and/or the State Board of Education from 1996 until the present.
7. Provide the original statute authorizing public charter schools in Florida and all subsequent amendments.
8. Provide the per student allocation annually for students in Duval County Public Schools, including traditional public schools and public charter schools in Duval County, from 1996 until 2019.
9. Provide the names of all public charter schools in Duval County that were closed from 1996 until 2019.
10. Provide the racial, gender and socio-economic data for each public school in Duval County, including traditional public schools and public charter schools.
11. Provide the student achievement data (reading, mathematics and high school graduation) for students in Duval County Public schools, including traditional public schools and public charter schools, disaggregated by grade, gender, race and socio-economic level from 2008 until 2019.
12. Provide the data on students in Duval County who have exercised the open enrollment option either to attend a school in Duval County Public Schools or to attend another county (public school) in Florida, 2017-present.
13. What is the projected revenue annually if the qualified electors in Duval County vote to approve the referendum, Ordinance 2019-0380?

- **Council Member Terrance Freeman, At-Large Group 1**

1. What is the make-up of the Citizens Review Committee? How are they selected? How will their authority be exercised?
2. What is the Plan to address the planned growth coming to various areas/part of Jacksonville?
3. Is there a plan to bridge the gap between the 1.9 billion dollar plan and the 1.3 billion dollar revenue estimate from the tax?
4. What are the priorities for construction/renovations?

- **Council Member Ju'Coby Pittman, District 8**

1. In regard to schools that will be closed or remodeled, what is the plan for transporting the affected students to the new schools, or will the parents be responsible for their own transportation?
2. What is the order of priority proposed cost and scope and what would be the timeline for the most critical schools, by school names, for closures or remodeling of each school?
3. Is there an opportunity for the Duval County School Board to modify the construction standards to standards similar to the Charter School construction standards for cost savings or consideration?
4. What formula is used to determine the increase growth for students enrollment projection for new schools and how would that impact it once the school is built if the enrollment decreases, if projected charter schools are developed in the same communities and a neighborhood. What would be the potential loss revenue?
5. What is the comprehensive plan for usage of schools that could potentially become an eyesore or abandon in communities and distressed neighborhoods if they are not repurposed?